

Let's Eat

Food, family, friends & kitchen comforts.



Mark a pie with a letter made from extra dough to pay tribute to someone special in your family.

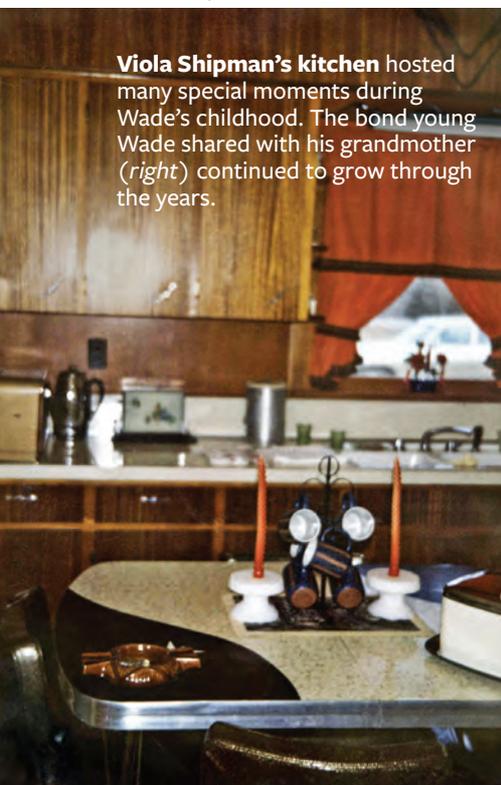
THE GATHERING PLACE

The Pies with the 'S'

This grandmother created lasting inspiration from her kitchen. **BY WADE ROUSE**



Viola Shipman's kitchen hosted many special moments during Wade's childhood. The bond young Wade shared with his grandmother (right) continued to grow through the years.



I spent a lot of time in my childhood in my grandma's country kitchen, tugging at the hem of her ironed white aprons, each embroidered with bright strawberries or pretty flowers.

My tiny grandma and her little kitchen seemed larger than life to me as a child. A vintage stove anchored one side of the room, while her sparkly countertops were topped by a breadbox that held Little Debbie's and Wonder Bread slices.

But the most prized possession in her kitchen was her recipe box. A brilliant baker, my grandma cherished the burnished wood box jammed with beloved and secret family recipes, organized into different categories—Pies, Cakes, Cookies, Breads—and all written in her slanting cursive.

Her Formica dinette table provided the glamorous backdrop for her glorious fresh fruit pies—strawberry-rhubarb, blueberry, apple, cherry—the golden crusts decorated with a

“Every Thanksgiving, I still make the treasured desserts from my grandma's recipe box.”

pretty “S” for her last name, Shipman, the only demonstrable sign of pride my grandma ever presented.

Her cookies—chocolate chip, oatmeal and thumbprints filled with homemade jams—were devoured before they even had a chance to cool.

That tiny kitchen was not only where my family gathered every Sunday and holiday, but also where I learned to cook and bake, my grandma teaching me the history of our family through the food she made. Her kitchen wasn't just a place to cook; it was the place where she connected our family's past to the present.

Her kitchen is where I shared my life with my grandma, too. After baking, she would always cut two slices of pie, pour a cup

of coffee for herself and a glass of milk for me, and we'd sit and talk at her table. We'd mostly discuss what I was going to do when I grew up, how I was going to change the world and see places she never had the chance to see.

“What do you think Paris is like in the spring?” she'd ask. “Send me a postcard when you go.”

I was still in college when my grandma hosted her last Thanksgiving. I returned home on break and spent most of my time in the kitchen with her, baking the pies for our family, decorating the tops with that signature “S.” When we finished, she cut two slices and poured the coffee and milk, as always.

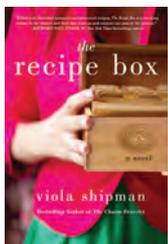
“Tell me about Chicago,” she said, eyes wide, elbows resting on her Formica table.



Apples were key for many of Viola Shipman's (in middle) recipes, including apple butter and applesauce.

Every Thanksgiving, I still make the treasured desserts from my grandma's recipe box. And after I finish, I still cut two slices of pie, pour a cup of coffee for her and a glass of milk for myself, take a seat at my own kitchen table, and tell my grandma all about my life. ■

WADE ROUSE is a bestselling author of eight books written under his grandmother's name, Viola Shipman, to honor the woman whose heirlooms, life, love and lessons inspire his fiction.



His current novel, *The Recipe Box*, draws from his grandmother's recipe boxes. His next, *The Summer Cottage*, will be published in April.

Maple-Glazed Apple Pie

Even though we've lived in Florida for years, I still feel like a Vermonter. My parents send us a bushel of Vermont apples each fall, and we try to visit in the spring to do some maple sugaring.

—PATRICIA PUTNAM LAKELAND, FL

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 55 MIN.
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

Pastry for double-crust pie (9 in.)

- 6 cups thinly sliced peeled apples, divided
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup crushed gingersnaps
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- ¼ cup maple syrup

1. Line a 9-in. pie pan with bottom crust. Place half of the apples in the crust; set aside.

2. In a bowl, combine the sugars, gingersnaps, cinnamon, nuts and butter; sprinkle half over apples in crust. Top with remaining apples and sugar mixture. Roll out the remaining pastry to fit top of pie.

Cut a few slits in the top and place over apples; seal. Cover loosely with foil and bake at 375° for 35 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, bring maple syrup to a gentle boil in a small saucepan. Remove pie from oven; remove foil and brush hot syrup over pie and into vents. Return pie to oven and bake, uncovered, about 20 minutes longer. Serve warm.

1 PIECE 525 cal., 25g fat (10g sat. fat), 25mg chol., 325mg sod., 73g carb. (41g sugars, 2g fiber), 5g pro.